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ABSTRACT

The education reform movement that began in the 1980s has produced disappointing and unsatisfactory results. This book asserts that the reform movement must be reformulated, and that this information is possible and even likely for a new and vigorous effort to save the children and the schools. It argues that the reform movement is rooted in a nested set of assumptions that constrain the proposition and implementation of change. The book's primary concern about the efficacy of American education is focused on the least-served population--children of poverty. Each chapter presents a set of controlling assumptions from each of the five domains of study: (1) the political context of education; (2) the social context of education; (3) the organizational structure of schools; (4) the people in educational organizations; and (5) the organizational and educational processes in schools. The final chapter presents alternative policies for reform, which ask the following questions: For whom are the benefits of education reform intended? Who are the reformers and where will the reform occur? What role could or should be played by government functionaries, academics, and advocates for reform, some of whom now believe they are the agents of reform? (LMI)

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